





F I R S T
CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST


*We are a
progressive,
inclusive,
spiritually alive
servant community.*

e-pistle for the Week of August 9, 2018

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Minister's Message

Dear First Congregational Church Family,

On Sunday we heard the Apostle Paul's words about speaking the truth in love. Churches can learn from the theory of Non-Violent Communication, developed by Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D. as presented in his book, Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life.

Here is a recap of my adaptation for us to consider:

1. Observation that God is in the Moment: As Paul says, we are to lead a life worthy of the calling to which we are called as followers of the way of Jesus. This means humility, gentleness, patience bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

So we begin with observing in a spirit of humility, gentleness and patience, we notice what is around us without judging, without labeling good or bad. We notice simply what is there in the present moment. We observe that God is also present in this moment. This is taking time to observe before we speak.

2. Feeling Unity in the Spirit: Paul says, there is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Creator of all, who is above all, and through all and in all.

Take a moment to notice what you are feeling, what are the various emotions and physical sensations. Feeling is different than thinking. This is a time to feel God's Spirit, to feel the oneness with the body of Christ, to feel God's presence and to feel whatever else is going on emotionally and physically. Before we speak, we check in with our spirits, our emotions, our body. We connect ourselves in unity with the Spirit that makes us one.

3. Noticing the Needs of the Body of Christ: Paul says, each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. We each are in need of grace, grace from God and grace from one another. Everyone needs and deserves God's grace.

Taking a moment before we speak, we honor that everyone has need for grace.

Understanding this need will help us to cultivate empathy so that we can speak the truth in love.

4. Speaking the truth in Love: Paul says, speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into Christ, from whom the whole body is joined and knit together, promoting the body's growth in building itself up in love.

The fourth and last step to remember when we seek to speak the truth in love is to ground our words in God's love. This means that what we say is true because it honors who we are as children of God, it honors who others are as children of God. What we say is loving and true because it build us up in love, it does not tear us down and it is not hateful.

Speaking the truth in love means that what we say is a request for action that is realistic and positive, that is concrete and immediate. Speaking from a place of truth and love is what Christ calls us to do.

We speak the truth in love by (1) making the observation that God is present in this moment (2) Feeling unity in the Spirit (3) Noticing the Needs of the Body of Christ (4) Speaking the truth in Love.

This is something we can use in our daily lives with our partners, friends, family, at work, at church, at community meetings...anytime we find ourselves desiring to as Paul says, "lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility, gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Spoken with love,
Pastor Sarah

Worship for Sunday

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m. Just Peace

August 12th - Continued discussion of "Just Peace" and Just Peace Church process.

Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Sarah will be preaching on "Faith in a Radiant Light."

New Creation - 5:30 p.m.

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away.... Well, it's actually not so far away or long ago at this time, because this Sunday we begin our exploration of the "theology" of Star Wars. The relationships depicted in the films will form the backdrop for our theme of the redemptive power of love. If you missed the viewing of *Revenge of the Sith (Episode III)* last Sunday, no worries because there will be a few clips from the film to focus our worship. Please join us for this unique opportunity to revisit this classic tale and to explore a new perspective on it. We will view *The Empire Strikes Back (Episode V)* at 6:45 following worship in preparation for next Sunday's service.

* There will be extra cars in the parking lot this Sunday evening for a neighborhood event, so please plan accordingly.

Adult Ed - Just Peace

August 19 - Rev. Paul ("Chip") Jahn, will share his experiences with the Just Peace movement and the ministry his two churches have had in peaceful pursuits.

August 26 - Katie Booth will present her insights of our relationship and service with Family Promise as a prelude to the "buzz" after church that day by the head of Family Promise, Mike Chapuran.

What's Happening at FCC

Exciting New Opportunity!

Have you heard about Chautauqua? It's a summer retreat that gives you space for religious, spiritual, aesthetic, intellectual, and personal growth. A long-time FCC member has had such a wonderful time there, for so many years, that they decided to fund other FCC members to enjoy a week there each year. The first selectee will attend in the summer of 2019. There are applications on the bulletin board.

"Chain Saw" Work Day - Saturday, August 18th, 9-Noon

The honeysuckle has taken over the edges of our drive way, parking lot, and other areas. We are going to take out as much as we can, and we plan to have a chipper onsite to make mulch out of all the wood debris. There are also several other outdoor and indoor cleaning jobs that need attention. Let's make this a fun time of sharing fellowship and sweat equity, even if your role is to simply help with refreshments. In particular, we are in need of chain saws, and their people. If you can come or have questions, please contact Wendy Baldwin or fill out the sign-up sheet in the Narthex.

Free Concert! Sunday, August 19th

In past summers, many of us have thoroughly enjoyed the music of the Circle City Chamber Chorus (fondly known as C4), under the direction of First Congregational's one-time choir director Doug Johnson, as they presented a free concert following their summer rehearsals at FCC. This year they have moved their rehearsals to Meridian Street United Methodist Church (5500 North Meridian St.), so they'll be presenting their free concert there on Sunday, August 19, at 4:00 PM. We at FCC are again encouraged to attend and support this excellent group of singers. The concert usually lasts about an hour, so the timing will work well for folks to drive the short distance up Meridian Street for New Creation worship at 5:30.

Double Buzzes on August 26 on Family Promise Hosting

Whether you've been involved with FCC's Family Promise hosting already or are new and wondering what it really involves, the August Buzzes are for you. We will have two Buzzes that day—one following a pitch-in lunch after Traditional worship and the other after New Creation worship at 6:30 p.m., with heavy snacks. Mike Chapuran, Executive Director of Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis, will conduct a workshop on family hosting, helping us understand better what their expectations of us are and how best to interact with our guests. Each hosting week involves at least 60 church members, and we hope everyone who participates is informed and comfortable with the experience. This is your best opportunity to refresh your understanding or learn for the first time. Please plan to attend one session on August 26 and come with your questions.

Green Team Tip

Don't forget reusable shopping bags when doing your grocery shopping. Carry them into dry goods stores to avoid plastic there as well.

FCC Solar Project!!!

The First Congregational Green Team has launched a fund drive to install solar panels. We're planning to raise \$60,000 by September 1st. To give this effort a boost, Rich Gibson has pledged to match all contributions, dollar for dollar, up to \$20,000. Simply write "solar panels" on your check. If you'd rather pledge, or even donate shares of stock or mutual funds, we can accommodate that, too. Please contact Rich Gibson, hoot eagle@me.com, 770-548-5217 (cell) or 317-735-2895 (home) for details. Thanks!

Mission of the Month: Greater Indy Habitat for Humanity

Celebrating 30 years of providing strength, stability, and independence through home ownership, in 2017, 5650 GIHH volunteers built or rehabbed 26 homes and repaired 63. A study by the Sagamore Institute revealed that Habitat homeowners benefit in many

ways. Chronic housing-related illnesses decrease. 71% of homeowners started, completed, or plan to complete higher education or professional training. Homeowners end or reduce their dependence on public assistance programs like Public Housing Assistance, Utility Bill/Energy Assistance, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance (SNAP), Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF), and aid to Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

FCC has supported Habitat for over 20 years financially and through volunteer hours on builds. Please give generously in August to support Greater Indy Habitat. Single dollar bills in the offering plate will go to Habitat. For larger amounts, please use the Special Offering envelopes noting "Habitat" or put that in the notation line of your check. Thank you!

Pantry Items of the Month

During August we are collecting the following items: beans, canned peaches, canned pears, jelly and jam, and bathroom tissue.

Pastoral Care

Please contact Pastor Sarah at (386) 478 - 9012 or at pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

This Week at First Congregational

Sunday, August 12	5:30 p.m.	New Creation
Wednesday, August 15	7:30 p.m.	New Creation Planning Team
Saturday, August 18	12:30 p.m.	Music Support Team
Sunday, August 19	9:45 a.m.	Adult Class – Just Peace, with guest, Chip Jahn
Sunday, August 19	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service, guest preacher, Chip Jahn
Sunday, August 19	5:30 p.m.	New Creation